

BOOSTING SMALL BUSINESS LENDING

(Mr. MICHAUD asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. MICHAUD. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the President's effort to boost small business lending.

Later this week, we will be taking up a bill that my colleagues and I on the Small Business Committee drafted to do just that. Each year, the bill is expected to support \$44 billion in small business lending, helping to save or create 1.3 million jobs annually. Small businesses are the backbone of Maine's economy, and they are key to our economic recovery.

The recession and credit crunch have hurt small businesses' access to capital, and they cannot afford inaction. This bill will give them additional resources when they need it the most. I urge the Senate to join the House in passing a strong bill that we can get to the President's desk as soon as possible.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. CANTOR asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mr. CANTOR. Mr. Speaker, I rise in the midst of the increasing momentum we detect on the other side to push through a government takeover of health care in our country. To me, it is about four distinct questions.

One, does anyone believe that the passage of a \$1 trillion bill, does anyone believe that won't aggravate the deficit? I think the answer is resoundingly "no."

Secondly, if it is going to be \$1 trillion, who is going to pay for that? Well, we know that the majority is talking about small businesses and seniors paying for that.

Third, does anyone really think that the health care overhaul being proposed is going to make your health care better? I don't think so.

And lastly, is there any guarantee that this government is not going to get in between you and your doctor? Mr. Speaker, I say to that, the answer is "no."

We Republicans have a better way. We believe we can accomplish reform aimed at the discrete problems that exist, to fix those, and then expand health care opportunities for those who do not currently have it.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. KENNEDY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KENNEDY. Mr. Speaker, the other side talks about the health care reform bill costing a lot of money. Right now, consumers in America are spending millions and millions of dol-

lars paying that to the insurance companies. One-third of the health care dollar goes to no such thing as health care; it goes to the insurance companies. That's why the Democratic proposal restricts the amount of money that insurance companies can spend on bureaucracy. That's where the out-of-pocket expenses actually go to health care. That sounds like a smart idea to me.

Furthermore, the insurance companies can no longer discriminate against preexisting conditions, no longer can discriminate against people who need health care. That sounds like a good idea.

Finally, talking about reducing deficit spending, this bill requires insurance companies to keep costs under control. That saves the government money and reduces the deficit because the biggest spender in health care is the Federal Government through entitlements.

I don't know why the other side is so hell-bent on protecting insurance companies' medical inflation that only adds to the deficit in this country.

HEALTH CARE

(Mr. PENCE asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PENCE. Mr. Speaker, at nearly \$1 trillion in spending and tax increases, the Democrat health care bill is a bad deal for taxpayers; but it is a worst deal for American seniors, and senior citizens deserve to know about it.

Included in the Democrat health care plan are massive cuts in Medicare Advantage, \$162 billion in reductions in this popular program. As a result, Medicare Advantage plans will drop out of the program, limiting seniors' choices and causing many to lose their current health care coverage through Medicare Advantage. This will have an exceptionally negative impact in rural areas, like my district of eastern Indiana.

According to the Congressional Budget Office as well, the Democrat's health care plan will increase the cost of Medicare prescription drug premiums by 20 percent in the next decade.

The President said, If you like your current plan, you can keep it. Well, after looking at the Democrats' plan for seniors, I guess he wasn't talking about senior citizens when he said that.

HEALTH CARE

(Mrs. DAVIS of California asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, no doubt, the national discussion over health care reform has been emotional for all Americans. People from every corner and every background of our country have had a chance to tell their story, to weigh in on this issue.

Many of the stories we have heard from our constituents back home have been personal—they have been heart-breaking—about struggles with the health care system. Those kinds of experiences can sometimes be difficult and they can be emotional to share, but they have played an important part in the conversation.

Because we are starting to see that in our uniquely American way, all of that passion is being channeled to productive change. We are close to bringing forward a potentially life-changing bill.

Just think about what this means. For the first time, millions of uninsured Americans can have access to health insurance and all of us will have health security knowing we can't lose our coverage. Ultimately, voting on reform means voting to give millions of Americans peace of mind.

HEALTH CARE

(Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, this morning I find myself reflecting on a recent town hall meeting where nearly 1,000 people showed up, many of them seniors, and they were not happy. In eastern Washington in my congressional district, it is estimated that 20,000 seniors may lose their health care because of the cuts to Medicare Advantage. H.R. 3200 cuts \$162 billion from that program, and they are cuts that hit especially those who live in rural communities the hardest.

The Obama administration promised Americans that if they liked their doctor, they could keep their doctor; if they liked their health insurance plan, they could keep it. But I guess that doesn't apply to seniors.

These are real cuts to Medicare Advantage, and it will mean canceled insurance policies and higher premiums. For those living on a fixed income, this could mean less money for food, clothing, and shelter.

House Republicans are committed to a step-by-step approach to addressing health care that will start by reducing the cost drivers. We should pass these cost control reforms rather than financing a government takeover on our Seniors.

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EDUCATION REFORM

(Ms. HIRONO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute.)

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, one of the most notable improvements I've seen since the beginning of this administration is the importance the President has placed on education.

I know I'm not alone in recognizing how President Obama and Education